



Senate Approves Lugar-Feinstein Measure to Restore \$1.4 Billion for International Affairs

- Funding Would Help Alleviate the Conditions that Foster Terrorism -
March 11, 2004

Washington, DC - The U.S. Senate today approved an amendment, sponsored by Richard Lugar (R-IN) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), that increases budget authority for U.S. foreign assistance spending.

Specifically, this amendment adds \$1.4 billion in funding for the international affairs budget. This exceeds the President's request of \$31.5 billion for FY 2005 by \$300 million. Last year, the Senate accepted a Lugar-Feinstein amendment that restored \$1.15 billion to the FY 2004 international budget. As a part of this increase, the amendment will add \$500 million to combat global HIV/AIDS.

"Increasing the foreign aid budget allows us to attack the conditions that foster terror and autocratic governments – poverty, illness, disease, illiteracy – at a far lower cost and with less bloodshed than military interventions in the future," Senator Feinstein said. **"We should not wait until a nation hits rock bottom to build schools, open hospitals, and provide food to those in the developing world who so desperately need it."**

Two years ago at the international development conference in Monterey, Mexico, President Bush proposed the Millennium Challenge Account, a new initiative to increase U.S. foreign assistance funding by \$5 billion over the next three years.

"Terrorists prey on the hopelessness, anger, fear, and alienation of the poor and provide an easy way out of the misery of the developing world," Senator Feinstein said. **"Foreign aid promotes tolerance, understanding, and political stability by providing education, health care, shelter, and food to those who need it most."**

Worldwide, there are currently:

- 2.8 billion people who live in abject poverty - getting by on \$2 a day or less;
- Close to 1 billion people who are undernourished;
- 2.5 billion who do not have access to adequate sanitation.

The United States ranks next to last among 21 industrialized donor countries in per capita foreign assistance. In fact, the United States spends less than \$30 a year for each of its citizens helping those in the developing world, compared with a median per capita of \$70 by other industrialized nations.

“I firmly believe that if we are to win the war against terror and decrease global poverty, we must use every tool at our disposal to do so - and this includes increasing foreign aid spending," Senator Feinstein said. “This funding is key to protecting our national security and our standing as a leader in the effort to reduce global poverty. The Senate, by accepting this amendment, has risen to the challenge.”

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